

I Claim:

1. A method to facilitate delivery of a product from a provider to a consumer; the method comprising the steps of:
 - (a) associating a serial number of said product with an identification number;
 - (b) recording said identification number on a card;
 - (c) activating said identification number on said card at a point of sale; and
 - (d) facilitating delivery of said product from said provider to said consumer.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein said card is attached to a package.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein said package includes a content storage device.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is activated by a transaction manager.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is activated by said provider.
6. The method of claim 1 wherein said product is selected from the group consisting of video games, music and literature.
7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of recording a control number on said card.
8. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of recording a means to contact said provider on said card.
9. The method of claim 1 comprising the step of facilitating the delivery of said products by downloading said products to a content storage device.
10. The method of claim 1 comprising the step of facilitating the delivery of said

products by downloading said products to a consumer's computer.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is recorded on said card using a bar code.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is recorded on said card using a magnetic stripe.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is recorded on said card using a computer chip.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is recorded on said card using a hard drive.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein the identification number is printed on said card.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein more than one identification number is provided.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein said identification number is obscured.

18. The method of claim 1 wherein said card is attached to a package.

19. A method to facilitate delivery of a service from a provider to a consumer, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing an identification number associated with said service;

(b) recording said identification number on a card;

(c) activating said identification number on said card at a point of sale; and

(d) facilitating delivery of said service from said provider to said consumer.

20. The method of claim 19 wherein said card is attached to a package.

21. The method of claim 20 wherein said package includes a content storage device.

22. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is activated by a transaction manager.
23. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is activated by a provider.
24. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of recording a control number on said card.
25. The method of claim 19 further comprising the step of recording a means to contact said provider on said card.
26. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is recorded on the card using a magnetic stripe.
27. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is recorded on the card using a computer chip.
28. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is recorded on the card using a hard drive.
29. The method of claim 19 wherein said identification number is recorded on the card using a bar code.
30. The method of claim 19 wherein said service is selected from the group consisting of: extended warranty, insurance, cable, ISP, and DSL.
31. The method of claim 19 wherein more than one identification number is provided on said card.
32. The method of claim 19 wherein said service is a single event.
33. The method of claim 19 wherein said service is a fractional time span.
34. A method of using a card and package combination to activate delivery of a product or a service from a provider, the card including a data encoded portion, said card being secured to a package; the method comprising the steps

of:

- (a) encoding an identification number on to the data encoded portion of said card;
- (b) using a POS terminal device to read the encoded identification number while said card is secured to secured to a package;
- (c) then transmitting the identification number from a POS terminal device to a transaction manager;
- (d) activating the identification number by the transaction manager;
- (e) then providing said active identification number to said provider by said transaction manager;
- (f) requesting delivery of said product or said service by a consumer from said provider by providing said active identification number to said provider; and
- (g) delivering said product or said service to said consumer from said provider in response to said provider receiving the active identification number.

35. The method of claim 34 wherein more than one identification number is provided.

36. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion provides a control number.

37. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion identifies the provider.

38. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion identifies the product or service to be delivered.

39. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion directs the

transmission of the identification number to the provider.

40. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion directs the transmission of the identification number to a transaction manager.

41. The method of claim 34 wherein said data encoded portion is selected from the group consisting of a magnetic stripe; a computer chip; a hard drive; and a barcode.

42. The method of claim 34 wherein said consumer provides the identification number to the provider via the Internet.

43. The method of claim 34 wherein said consumer provides the identification number to said provider via a phone line.

44. The method of claim 34 wherein said package includes a content storage device.

45. The method of claim 34 wherein said package includes a control number.

46. A method of using a card and package combination to activate delivery of a product or a service by a provider, said card and package combination comprising a package and said card including a data encoded portion, said card being secured to the package; said method comprising the steps of:

(a) encoding an identification number on to said data encoded portion of said card;

(b) using a POS terminal device to read said encoded identification number, while said card is secured to the package;

(c) then transmitting said identification number from said POS terminal device to a provider;

(d) activating said identification number by said provider;

(e) then requesting delivery of said product or said service by a consumer

from said provider, by providing said active identification number to said provider; and

- (f) delivering said product or said service to said consumer from the provider in response to said provider receiving said active identification number.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein more than one identification number is provided.

48. The method of claim 46 wherein said data encoded surface provides a control number.

49. The method of claim 46 wherein said data encoded portion identifies the product or service to be delivered.

50. The method of claim 46 wherein said data encoded portion directs the transmission of the identification number to the provider.

51. The method of claim 46 wherein said data encoded portion directs the transmission of the identification number to said transaction manager.

52. The method of claim 46 wherein said data encoded portion is selected from the group consisting of a magnetic stripe; a computer chip; a hard drive and a barcode.

53. The method of claim 46 wherein said package includes a content storage device.

54. The method of claim 46 wherein said package includes a control number.

55. The method of claim 46 wherein said consumer provides said identification number to said provider via the Internet.

56. The method of claim 46 wherein said consumer provides said identification number to said provider via a phone line.

57. The method of claim 46 wherein said identification number is printed on said card.

58. The method of claim 46 wherein said identification number is obscured.

59. A method of using a card to facilitate delivery of a product to a consumer, the card including at least one data encoded portion, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) encoding an identification number on to said at least one data encoded portion of said card;

(b) using a POS terminal device to read an encoded identification number on said card;

(c) then transmitting said identification number from said POS terminal device to a transaction manager or a provider;

(d) activating the identification number by said transaction manager or said provider;

(e) transmitting said active identification number to said POS terminal device;

(f) providing said active identification number from said POS terminal device to a consumer; and

(g) facilitating the delivery of said product, by said consumer providing said provider with said active identification number.

60. The method of claim 59 further comprises the steps of:

(a) transmitting the active identification number to the POS terminal device, the POS terminal device being in electronic communication with a means to print; and

(b) printing said active identification number in response to receiving the

active identification number by the POS terminal device.

61. The method of claim 59 wherein the data encoded portion of the card encodes licensing documents, the method further comprises the steps of:

- (a) providing the active identification number to said POS terminal device;
said POS terminal device being in electronic communication with a means to print;
- (b) then accessing licensing documents encoded in said data encoded portion in response to said active identification number, and
- (c) printing the licensing documents in response to receiving the active identification number.

62. The method of claim 59 wherein facilitating the delivery of said product includes writing said product to a content storage device.

63. The method of claim 59 wherein said identification number is printed on said card.

64. The method of claim 59 wherein said identification number is printed on said card and said identification number is obscured.

65. A method to administer contracted services comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a data encoded card having a pre-determined contract value and an identification number associated with said pre-determined contract value;
- (b) facilitating activation of said identification number at a point of sale; and
- (c) facilitating delivery of said contracted services.

66. The method of claim 65 wherein said contracted service is warranty extension

67. The method of claim 65 wherein said contracted service is insurance.

68. A method of using a card having a data encoded portion to administer contracted services, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) associating a pre-determined contract value and an identification number;

(b) encoding said identification number on to the data encoded portion of said card to provide an administration of contract card;

(c) issuing said administration of contract card at a point of sale to a consumer;

(d) transmitting said identification number from a POS terminal device to a transaction manager;

(e) activating the identification number by said transaction manager to provide an activated administration of contract card;

(f) opening a file associated with said identification number by said transaction manager;

(g) redeeming said activated administration card by transmitting the identification number from said POS terminal device to said transaction manager; and

(h) authorizing said contracted services.

69. The method of claim 68 further comprising the step of transmitting said active identification number to said provider.

70. The method of claim 68 further comprising the step of printing a contract encoded in the data encoded card by said POS terminal device.

71. The method of claim 68 wherein said contracted service is extended warranty.

72. The method of claim 68 wherein said contracted service is insurance.

73. A method to provide point of sale generated access to a remote file in a

transaction between a merchant, provider, transaction manager and a consumer comprising:

- (a) providing a card having a data encoded portion, the encoded data including an identification number;
- (b) reading the data encoded portion with a point of sale terminal device;
- (c) transmitting the data from POS terminal device to the transaction manager;
- (d) activating the identification number by the transaction manager;
- (e) transmitting the activated identification number to a provider from the transaction manager;
- (f) accessing a provider's web site by a consumer;
- (g) providing the identification number to the provider to obtain authorization for the consumer to access said remote file; and
- (h) downloading said remote file to a content storage device.

74. The method of claim 73 wherein the provider creates a URL corresponding to said file.

75. The method of claim 73 wherein the consumer receives the URL for the said file.

76. The method of claim 73 wherein said card is attached to a package.

77. The method of claim 73 wherein said content storage device is pre-written with a URL corresponding to said remote file.

78. A method to provide point of sale generated access to a remote file in a transaction between a merchant, provider, and a consumer comprising:

- (a) providing a card having a data encoded portion, the encoded data including an identification number;

- (b) reading the data encoded portion with a point of sale terminal device;
- (c) transmitting the data from the point of sale terminal device to the provider;
- (d) activating the identification number by the provider;
- (e) accessing a provider's web site by the consumer;
- (f) providing the identification number to the provider to obtain authorization for the consumer to access said remote file; and
- (g) downloading said remote file to a content storage device.

79. The method of claim 78 wherein the provider creates a URL authorized file.

80. The method of claim 78 wherein the consumer receives the URL for the authorized file.

81. The method of claim 78 wherein said card is attached to a package.

82. The method of claim 78 wherein the disk is pre-written with a provider's URL.

83. A method of providing a consumer with a data encoded card, including an active identification number, for providing activated delivery of products or services, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) providing a card with a data writable portion capable of receiving an identification number;
- (b) using a point of sale terminal device to contact a transaction manager;
- (c) requesting an active identification number from the transaction manager;
- (d) transmitting said active identification number from the transaction manager to the point of sale terminal wherein the point of sale terminal device encodes said active identification number on to the data

writable portion of said card; and

(e) providing a consumer with the data encoded card including said active identification number.

84. The method of claim 83 wherein the data encoded card is pre-encoded with a specific product of service.

85. The method of claim 83 wherein said data writable portion is a hard drive.

86. The method of claim 83 wherein data writable portion is a computer chip.

87. A method to prevent consumer sharing of a software program owned by a software provider; the method comprising the steps of:

(a) associating a serial number of a software program with an identification number;

(b) recording an identification number on a data encoded portion of a card;

(c) activating said identification number at a point of sale;

(d) providing said active identification number to a software provider by a consumer;

(e) transmitting a registration requirement to said consumer from said software provider, wherein said registration requirement associate a consumer's computer equipment with said identification number; and

(f) preventing consumer sharing of said software program by downloading said software program to said consumer's computer equipment associated with said active identification number.

88. The method of claim 87 wherein the provider delivers an encrypted key to allow consumer to operate the software.

89. The method of claim 87 wherein the provider delivers an execution file to allow the consumer to open the software program

90. The means of claim 87 wherein said data encoded card is attached to a package.

91. The method of claim 87 wherein said data encoded card is attached to a package, said package further includes a content storage device.

5 92. The method of claim 87 wherein said identification number is printed on a card.

93. The method of claim 87 wherein said identification number is printed on a card and the number is obscured.

10 94. The method of claim 87 wherein said data encoded portion is selected from the group consisting of: a magnetic stripe; a computer chip; a hard drive; and a barcode.

95. A method of using a card and package combination to activate delivery of a software program or portion thereof from a provider to a consumer, the card including a data encoded portion and the card being secured to the package,
15 the method comprising:

- (a) encoding an identification number on to the data encoded portion of said card;
- (b) using a POS terminal device to read the encoded identification number from the data encoded portion of said, while said card is secured to
20 said package;
- (c) then transmitting said identification number from said POS terminal device to a provider;
- (d) then activating said identification number by said provider;
- (e) providing said identification number to said provider by a consumer;
- 25 (f) transmitting a registration contract by said provider to said consumer in

response to said identification number;

(g) transmitting a completed registration contract including consumer's computer serial number or modem serial number to said provider; and

(h) then delivering said software program or portion thereof to said consumer from said provider.

96. The method of claim 95 wherein said package includes a blank optical disk.

97. The method of claim 95 wherein said package includes a blank magnetic disk.

98. The method of claim 95 wherein said package includes a cartridge.

99. The method of claim 95 wherein said package includes an inoperative disk.

100. The method of claim 95 wherein said provider delivers an execution file.

101. The system of claim 95 wherein said data encoded card is a barcode.

102. A system for point of sale activated delivery of a product comprising:

(a) a data encoded card, said data including a unique identification number facilitating the delivery of said product; and

(b) a transaction manager in electronic communication with a point of sale terminal.

103. The system of claim 102 further comprising a provider in electronic communication with said transaction manager.

104. The system of claim 103 further comprising a consumer computer in electronic communication with said provider.

105. The system of claim 104 further comprising a consumer phone in electronic communication with said provider.

106. A system for point of sale activated delivery of a product comprising:

(a) a data encoded card having a unique identification number facilitating the delivery of said product; and

(b) a provider in electronic communication with a point of sale terminal.

107. The system of claim 106 further comprising a consumer computer in electronic communication with said provider.

108. The system of claim 106 further comprising a consumer phone in electronic communication with said provider.

109. A delivery device for use in a system for point of sale activated delivery of products or services, said delivery device comprising:

(a) a package;

(b) a content storage device retained by said package; and

(c) a data-encoded card secured to said package, said data-encoded card including a data-containing portion which is readable by a point of sale terminal device, said data-containing portion including at least one unique identification number.

110. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein:

said package includes first and second panels attached to one another.

111. The delivery device as recited in 109, wherein:

said first and second panels of said package each include an aperture formed in an upper portion thereof and extending therethrough, said apertures of said first and second panels being aligned with one another when said package is in a closed position, said apertures being suitable for receiving a device used to support and display the delivery device.

112. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein:

said package includes a scored interface between said first and second panels, said interface being scored to facilitate folding one of said first and second panels on top of the other of said first and second panels.

113. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein:

said package further includes an insert made of a clear plastic material,

said insert being secured to one of said first and second panels;

said content storage device being disposed within said insert such that

at least a portion of said content storage device is viewable from a position
exterior of said delivery device.

114. The delivery device as recited in claim 113, wherein:

said one of said first and second panels of said package includes an
aperture formed therein and extending therethrough, said aperture being
effective for receiving a portion of said insert therethrough.

115. The delivery device as recited in claim 113, wherein:

said insert includes a container portion having an open top and a
peripheral flange integral with said container portion adjacent said top;

said one of said first and second panels includes inside and outside
surfaces, said peripheral flange of said insert being secured to said inside
surface, said container portion of said insert protruding through said aperture
and beyond said outer surface.

116. The delivery device as recited in claim 111, wherein:

said other of said first and second panels includes a notch formed in a
lower portion thereof;

said package further includes a window secured to said other of said
first and second panels, said window being made of a clear plastic material
such that at least a portion of said data-encoded card is viewable from a
position exterior of said delivery device.

117. The delivery device as recited in claim 116, wherein:

said window includes a pane extending across said notch and a frame integral with said pane, said frame being secured to said other of said first and second panels.

118. The delivery device as recited in claim 117 wherein:

said light-emitting material of said window is Mylar®.

119. The delivery device as recited in claim 116, wherein:

said one of said first and second panels further includes a notch formed in a lower portion thereof;

said package further includes a window secured to said one of said first and second panels, said window being made of a clear plastic material such that at least a portion of said data-encoded card is viewable from a position exterior of said delivery device.

120. The delivery device as recited in claim 119, wherein:

said window includes a pane extending across said notch and a frame integral with said pane, said frame being secured to said one of said first and second panels.

121. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein:

said package comprises a box having a flap;

said content storage device is disposed within said box;

said data-encoded card is secured to said flap.

122. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein:

said package includes a single panel.

123. The delivery device as recited in claim 122, wherein:

said single panel includes a lower portion, a remaining portion and a laterally extending score forming an interface between said lower portion and

said remaining portion whereby said lower portion is bendable away from said data-encoded card to reveal a lower portion of said data-encoded card;

said data-encoded card being secured to said remaining portion of said single panel, said lower portion of said single panel extending below said card when said lower portion is not bent.

124. The delivery device as recited in claim 122, wherein:

said single panel includes an aperture formed in an upper portion thereof and extending therethrough, said aperture being suitable for a device used to support and display said delivery device.

125. The delivery device as recited in claim 122, wherein:

said package further includes an insert made of a clear plastic material, said insert being secured to said single panel;

said content storage device is disposed within said insert such that at least a portion of said content storage device is viewable from a position exterior of said delivery device.

126. The delivery device as recited in claim 125, wherein:

said single panel includes an aperture formed therein and extending therethrough, said aperture being effective for receiving a portion of said insert therethrough.

127. The delivery device as recited in claim 126, wherein:

said insert includes a container portion having an open top and a peripheral flange integral with said container portion adjacent said top;

said single panel includes front and rear surfaces, said peripheral flange of said insert being secured to one of said front and rear surfaces, said container portion of said insert protruding through said aperture and beyond

the other of said front and rear surfaces.

128. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device is an optical disk.

129. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device is a magnetic disk.

130. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device is a compact disk containing music thereon.

131. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device is a game cartridge.

132. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device is a book.

133. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said content storage device includes a box and a device disclosed within said box, said device comprising at least one of an optical disk, a magnetic disk, a compact disk containing music thereon, a game cartridge and a book.

134. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said data-encoded card includes front and rear surfaces and said data-containing portion comprises a magnetic stripe disposed on one of said front and rear surfaces.

135. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said magnetic stripe is laminated onto said one of said front and rear surfaces.

136. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said magnetic stripe is rolled onto said one of said front and rear surfaces.

137. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said magnetic stripe is encoded with a unique identification number that is correlated with a product or service to be delivered.

138. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said data-encoded card further includes a smart chip secured to said one of said front and rear surfaces.

139. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said data-encoded card further includes a bar code imprinted on said one of said front and rear surfaces.

140. The delivery device as recited in claim 134, wherein said data-encoded card further includes a hard drive ridge formed on said one of said front and rear surfaces.

141. The delivery device as recited in claim 109, wherein said data-encoded card includes front and rear surfaces and said data-containing portion comprises a hard drive ridge formed on one of said front and rear surfaces.

142. The delivery device as recited in claim 140, wherein said hard drive ridge is encoded with a unique identification number that is correlated with a product or service to be delivered.

143. A delivery device for use in a system for point of sale activated delivery of products, said delivery device comprising:

(a) a package;

(b) a hard drive card secured in said package, said hard drive card

including a data containing portion which is readable and writable by a point of sale terminal device, said data-containing portion including at least one unique identification number and the product to be delivered, wherein said package includes a pictorial representation of the product to be delivered.